TRUCK CAN SOLVE TIEUP PROBLEMS OF ALL SHIPPING

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Freight congestion is, in reality, terminal congestion. The present railroad situation vividly demonstrates that the root of the much discussed railroad inadequacy lies more in the lack of proper terminal facilities than it does in the lack of freight cars. It has further proved that the motor truck, properly used in conjunction with railroad terminals, can relieve terminal congestion and increase the productivity of each unit of the railroad's rolling stock.

Although it is estimated that the railroads of this country now need 500,000 more freight cars, it is obvious that, if this number of cars were put into service under existing terminal conditions, the confusion would be only increased.

Unfortunately, the majority of railroad terminals were constructed in the days of horse-drawn highway transportation facilities, and no provision was made for the advent of the motor truck. At that time it was necessary for the railroads to bring their freight within a radius of a day's team haul of its destination, a distance considerably less than can now be covered by a motor truck. Cities have grown and traffic has increased, but the terminals have remained practically unchanged as far as distribution radius is concerned. As a result, the railroads are attempting to operate on a horse-drawn basis of ultimate distribution and consequently freight piles up in the yards and the tracks are filled with trains awaiting their turn to be unloaded.

Although motor trucks are now being used to a large extent instead of horses, the platform area available for transferring shipments from the freight car to the truck is so confined that it is impossible to avoid congestion.

More Advantageous.

It is a fact that the average freight car travels only about six miles a day, and that this inefficiency can be attributed directly to wasted time through terminal congestion. Considering that we now have over 2,400,000 freight cars in use, it can be seen that every mile per day added to the productivity of this total by increasing terminal efficiency, is the equivalent of four hundred thousand more cars. Thus it is obvious that if a continuous movement of freight cars to and from their terminal points can be obtained, a two-fold advantage will result; first, eliminating the delay and waste incidental to congestions, and second, releasing a vast number of cars for main line traffic.

To say that this can be accomplished by utilizing the motor truck is not a mere prophecy—it is a proven reality. The few railroads that have applied the use of trucks in their limited way to this problem have met with remarkable success and should stand as uncompromising examples to every railroad now affected by terminal congestion. For example, figures compiled by the United States railroad administration show that in the Big Four yards at Cincinnati, the use of motor trucks with demountable bodies has reduced the time required per ton-mile for transfer shipments from 12 hours and 18 minutes, to less than three minutes. This saving of time is accompanied by a reduction of 50 cents per ton-mile on the cost of the transfer shipments. The New Jersey Central railroad has adopted motor truck service in connection with its Jersey City terminal in a way that indicates immense possibilities for minimizing congestion. This terminal became so congested during the recent general tieup that it became useless to send loaded freight cars there. So Plainfield, N. J., a city nearby, was made a terminal point and goods are now being transferred there to motor trucks and hauled into Jersey City and other destination points.

This idea of diverting shipments, while not a new one, has up to the present been confined to emergency use. It seems logical, however, that the diverting principle presents the most practicable means for permanently relieving the railroads of terminal congestion. By establishing subterminals at the outskirts of large cities on the various lines of approach, freight loads could be transferred to motor trucks and delivered to the consignees far more rapidly and economically than at present. This method would also relieve street traffic in the congested parts of large cities because (1) the terminals would then be adapted to use the more rapid and flexible moving motor truck instead of horse-drawn equipment, (2) the number of vehicles bringing and receiving goods at terminals would be divided in their operations to different parts of the city, and (3) the large capacity trucks could be utilized for handling car load lots, thus minimizing the number of vehicles required to handle transfers.

Are Now Permanent.

The motor truck is now a permanent supplement to the railroads and has proved its capacity to take over the short -haul traffic that has developed to be time-wasting and unprofitable business for them. By "feeding" short haul shipments to the main line traffic, it has released thousands of cars for long distance transportation and has done much toward relieving congestion at terminals. But the development of this co-operative relation between the railroad and motor truck is still in its infant stages. It is but natural that before long the railroad terminals of this country will be reorganized and adapted to obtain the full benefits of the economies and conveniences offered by the motor truck. The sooner we lend our energies to achieving a possibility instead of throwing up our hands in despair and waiting for a prodigious number of cars to spring up from nowhere, the better the transportation interests of the country will be served.

TRUCKS ON R. R. DUTY.

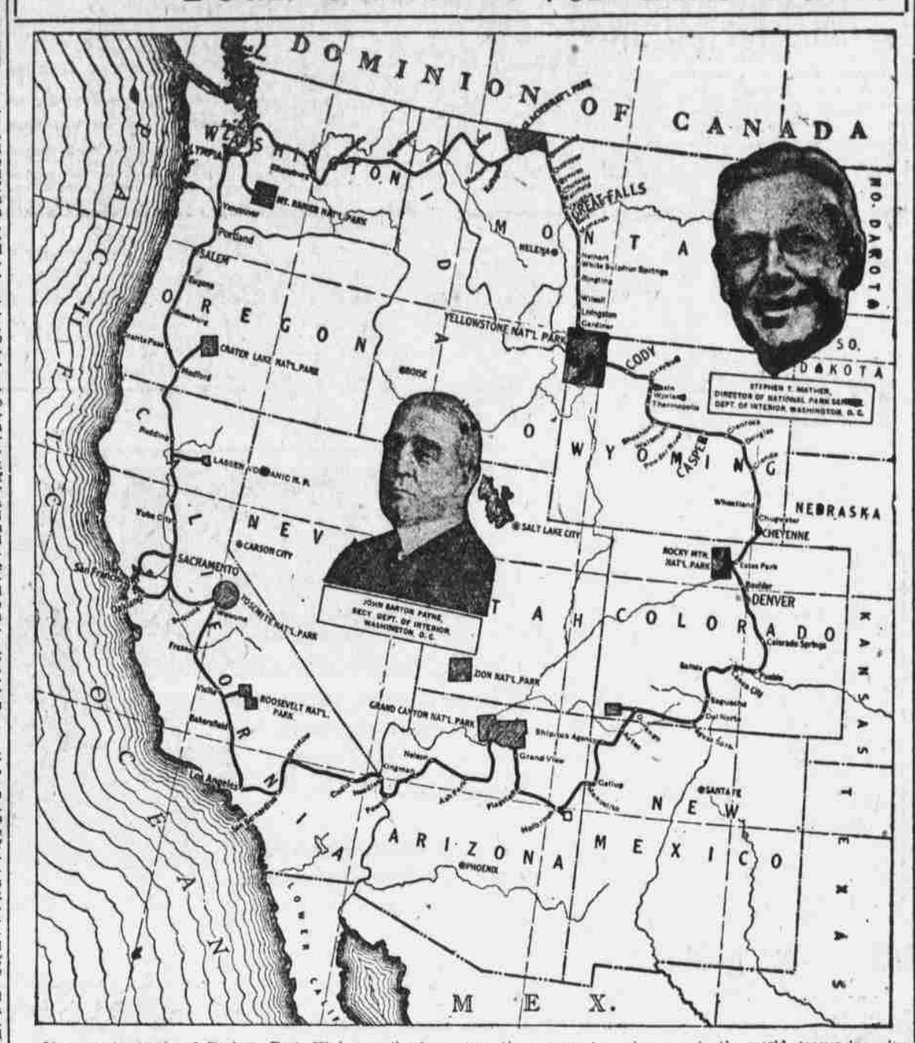
On one of the smaller railroads in Illinois there are being operated motor trucks instead of railroad trains. Each truck is of three-ton capacity and has a four-wheel drive. It carries 30 passengers in comfort and hauls a five-ton trailer loaded with freight. Standard railroad couplers, flanged rims and sand boxes are used. It is said that the truck makes the 32-mile run of this railroad on six gallons of gasoline with full load.

Because of the tremendous expense involved in operating a steam train, with its crew of engineer, fireman, conductor and brakeman, many of the smaller railroads are expected to turn to this mode of operation for relief from the high costs of customary operation.—Motor Life.

I had a little auto,
It used to buck and stail,
And though I overhauled it
It hardly ran at ail.

I coaxed it, I cursed it,
I studied books of rules,
But couldn't make my car behave
With seven sets of tools.
—Motor Life.

If You're Looking For a Real Auto Tour Glance Over This Route



Map of the National Park-to-Park Highway, the longest continuous scenic motor way in the world, traversing nine western states for a distance of 4,500 miles and connecting twelve national parks and many monuments and forests. The highway was dedicated to the people of America by Stephen T. Mather, director of the national parks service; governors of eight states, and officials of the National Park-to-Park Highway association and the American Automobile association, at Denver. Other dedicatory meetings are being held in cities on the route, in a sixty-day official tour. Congress will be asked to consider appropriations for converting this highway into a hard-surfaced boulevard, and for sufficient appropriations to adequately exploit and develop the scenic wonders in the playgrounds of the nation.